



# Safety Notes

No 1: September 2008

**RTBU e-bulletin for workplace delegates and OHS representatives**

The RTBU believes that all workplaces should be free of injury, disease and death. We all have a responsibility in monitoring work practices to ensure that all employers in our industry provide a safe work environment for employees.

## Bus & Tram Division force STA to fix brakes on Volvo articulated buses.

After months of reporting and raising issues and concerns relating to erratic braking on these buses, and safety concerns for drivers, passengers and members of the public, the problem (software affecting braking) they have been fixed on all 80 buses.

STA and Volvo initially denied that there was a problem beyond 'operator error', then decided that the new software may fix the non-existent safety issue. It did.

The next absurdity was that once the installation of the new software provided an immediate fix, State Transit wanted to trial it in one bus for 45 days before installing it in the other 79 faulty buses.

This led to threats of industrial action leading up to the World Youth Day events, and miraculously all buses were fitted with the new software.

## New Safety Resources

The RTBU website contains a range of OHS resources for workplace representatives and members. These include training resources, factsheets, inspection forms and more. To find out more, go to the OHS link on [www.rtbu-nsw.asn.au](http://www.rtbu-nsw.asn.au)

### Rail Safety Bill 2007

Changes to the Rail Safety Act have been proposed by ITSRR in the shape of the Rail Safety Bill 2007.

This process is now well under way with another comprehensive document sent out by ITSRR which contained the review comments and whether they have been included or not. The RTBU has reviewed the document and provided its comments.

**Report health and safety concerns or any unsafe work practices to your workplace OHS representative**

## Harmonisation of OHS Laws

The Federal Government is currently conducting a review of the States OHS legislation as part of an attempt to 'harmonise' all OHS legislation nationally.

The Review Panel will report on a number of key areas, such as duty of care and penalties to the Minister by the end of October, with a more detailed report and recommendations due by January 2009.

Unions, including the RTBU, and peak union councils have been consulted in this process, and made detailed submissions to the Review Panel. The main emphasis of the unions is to ensure that any harmonisation of OHS laws strengthens workers rights to a safe workplace, and an active role and participation in identifying and resolving workplace safety issues.

## PPP Project Car Markers

The RailCorp Train Crewing manager has proposed to standardize the stopping position for suburban trains by placing the car marker on the fence at the end of the platform, or mounted on a post, with the requirement that the driver stops with his body in line with marker.

As the PPP train is longer than most other trains, RailCorp is proposing to move the current car marker location on short platforms to facilitate this train. This will mean that the drivers cab will need to be off the platform to allow the guard access for wheelchair assistance. Therefore, for standardization, all trains would need to stop at this position. Obviously this is a trade off in safety. This also means that it now becomes critical to stop precisely at the car marker for the safety of the guard.

*Continued on page 2*

Loco reps have strongly opposed the move as posing unnecessary safety risks to drivers. To date, car markers have only ever been a guide, now they become a requirement with only a metre tolerance.